LIMITED ELECTION IN HIGH-SCHOOL WORK.

THE following program of studies was framed with these principles in mind: First, that the future school will pay great attention to the development of the individuality of the child. We shall cease to believe it wise to attempt to mold all children to one pattern and to base their instruction upon the same limited assortment of useful knowledge. We shall cease to believe that there are any divinely ordained whetstones or sharpeners of the mind, but will consider not so much what one studies as how he studies it. We shall cease to believe in the doctrine of formal discipline.

Second: The student should form his own course of study, choosing what branches he pleases, as many or as few of them as he pleases, and continuing them as long as he pleases. This does not preclude the consideration of the advice of parents and teachers and friends, but will leave the responsibility for his work upon the pupil, where it belongs.

Third: If a pupil chooses his own work he will work under a livelier sense of responsibility and with a fixed purpose in view. Nothing will do so much for the student as working with a definite motive behind and a fixed goal before. The earlier this sense of responsibility for the management of his own affairs is awakened in the student the better the results will be in the end.

Under this arrangement the old subjects—Latin, Greek and mathematics—will still be studied and studied more effectively than they are now. The student who pursues these subjects with a fixed purpose and with some feeling of ability to carry them on successfully will do more and better work than he will when they are presented by the powers that be. If the student aims at preparing himself for a definite course in a definite college he will be able to select those things that will advance him most rapidly and most surely toward his goal. He will be able to cast aside, either temporarily or permanently, many things

that he is now compelled to take merely because some one thinks they ought to be in every well-regulated course of study.

Under an elective scheme some provision will be made for the class of students who are not attracted by the Greek, Latin, and mathematics. The student will take so much or so little of the old studies as will assist him in his work in drawing, science, business or mechanical courses; and, studying them with a fixed purpose, will do them better. The boy with an executive turn of mind, who is aiming at work in the business world, will be able to find employment in our schools, and will do good work as well as his more receptive neighbor who is able to get nutriment out of the classics and mathematics. Our schools will then be common schools, schools for the people, and not schools for the class who are fitted for the professions by nature or by circumstances.

Under the elective scheme the pupil will be interested in a subject as a subject and not merely as a subject taken because others take it. Each student will take as much work or as little as his health, mental ability, and opportunities will permit him to do well, and he will in a measure cease to worry because he is not doing the same thing at the same time one of his neighbors is doing it. This will allow a leeway for the extremely bright boy as well as for the dull one. Under this scheme the dull boy will not be marked out so definitely for criticism because he is not in the same class with some neighbor who started at the same time he did. The dull boy's self respect will thus be preserved longer and he is likely to stay in school until he accomplishes something worth while.

Under the elective scheme our students will stay longer in the high school. They will not feel that there is any vital necessity for getting through at a fixed time and graduating with certain specified individuals. There is enough work in any of our modern high-school programs to employ a student for six years. The student whose circumstances will not permit his entering college can obtain an education that will fit him thoroughly for the work of any ordinary profession. I believe a program should include work enough to carry a student in

the high school up through the sophomore year in an ordinary college course. The elective scheme will enable us to accomplish this without any violent wrench of the opinions or prejudices of the public. We shall have secondary schools that will fit the student for a true university without anybody's knowing anything about it.

As an attempt at a practical application of the ideas suggested in the foregoing paragraphs, the course of study in the Lyons Township High School was prepared. A description of it follows.

The work is outlined under ten groups labeled Latin, Greek, German, French, mathematics, science, English, history, business, and manual training. Four years' work in Latin, two years' work in Greek, two years' work in German, two years' work in French, four years' work in mathematics, four years' work in science, three years' work in English, four years' work in history, two years' work in business, and two years' work in manual training, are offered.

As, owing to the size of the school, we were unable to duplicate the course in French and German, we deemed it best to prescribe two years' work in Latin as a prerequisite for the work in Greek, German and French. In the science group the work in physiology is prescribed by law so that no election is possible. Our course in physics was of such a nature that we deemed it advisable to prescribe two years' work in mathematics and one year in science as a prerequisite to it.

In the work in civics we believed it would be advisable for students to take the work in English and American history before entering the class in civics and economics.

There is no philosophical reason for confining the work in English to three years, but it was our expectation that later we would add to the course in English another year. It was impossible at that time to make a working program for students who were preparing for college, if we required four years' work in English. I believe, however, that four years' work should be prescribed in every American high school.

The course in the business and manual-training groups has

not been thoroughly worked out. We lacked some of the apparatus necessary to carry on a good course in commercial studies and work in iron. It was expected that later both these groups, 9 and 10, would be remodeled and extended.

Below is found an outline of the work of the Lyons Township High School, laid out in the ten groups before mentioned:

COURSES OF STUDY BY GROUPS.

Group I. Latin — Must be taken in order. 1) elementary work; 2) Caesar and prose; 3) Cicero and prose; 4) Virgil.

Group II. Greek — Prerequisites, courses 1 and 2, group I. 1) beginning Greek; 2) advanced Greek.

Group III. German — Prerequisites, courses 1 and 2, group I. 1) beginning German; 2) advanced German.

Group IV. French — Prerequisites, courses 1 and 2, group I. 1) beginning French; 2) advanced French.

Group V. Mathemathics — Must be taken in order. 1) beginning algebra; 2) plane geometry; 3) solid geometry and algebra completed; 4) plane trigonometry and higher algebra.

Group VI. Science — 1) physiology and physiography, required; 2) chemistry; 3) biology — (*a*) botany, (*b*) zoölogy. Courses 1 and 2 of this group required; 4) physics. Courses 1 and 2 of group V, and course 1 of group VI are prerequisites to physics.

Group VII. English — to be taken by everyone; 1) composition and rhetoric; 2) English; 3) English.

Group VIII. History — 1) Greek and Roman; 2) medieval and modern; prerequisite, (1) of this group; 3) English and American; 4) civics and economics; prerequisite, (3) of this group.

Group IX. Business — 1) bookkeeping and commercial arithmetic; 2) to be filled in later.

Group X. Manual Training — 1) bench work and mechanical drawing; 2) to be filled in later.

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